

## Practitioners make history after becoming first VetGP graduates

An important milestone was passed in November after a group of practising vets gained their Professional Doctorate and Masters Degrees in Professional Development (VetGP).

The group of six were presented with their Doctorates and Masters Degrees at the Graduation Ceremony which took place at RCVS headquarters at Belgravia House, London. Four practising vets (Bradley Viner, Paul Manning, Sue Shuttleworth and Graham Duncanson) who are members of the SPVS

Doctorate group which had, together with the RCVS, worked towards the new qualifications, officially became Doctors. Two further practitioners (Peter Brown and Sally Everitt) were presented with their Masters Degrees, also by Professor Jonathan Garnett of Middlesex University.



The group's ground-breaking achievement brings to fruition a decade of campaigning by SPVS for modular post-graduate qualifications with a greater focus on GP skills. The Doctorate research has helped to inform and support the new Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice, which is also supported by the Professional Development Foundation. The new qualifications completely replaced the old modular system of certificates from November, with the CertAVP (VetGP) being the first of the new modular series to feature greater structure and flexibility at their core. Middlesex University is the only body recognised by RCVS to assess this new qualification.

Students taking the VetGP qualification can now work from a syllabus that more accurately complements the experience of the practising modern vet.

John Hill, SPVS President, who delivered an address on behalf of SPVS, said: "The Society is delighted to have been involved with this enterprise. The research the group has done has been both innovative and ground-breaking and has underpinned the development of a new Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice in conjunction with the RCVS.

"I truly believe that this certificate sets the gold standard for all other modular certificates to follow. A major factor in the group's success has resulted from the partnership and teamwork with SPVS Doctorate Group, Middlesex University and the Professional Development Foundation (PDF)."

He added: "Please do not underestimate the sheer hard work, determination and sacrifice the team has given to the project. Bradley, Sue, Paul, Graham et al have made an amazing contribution to the whole veterinary profession. They have been dedicated, creative, focused and tenacious throughout."